

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 STATE 076379

67

ORIGIN SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-01 IO-01 ISO-00 /005 R

66611

DRAFTED BY: SNM:HRWELLMAN:BB

APPROVED BY:SNM:HRWELLMAN

----- 085805

R 161925Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 076379

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 76379 ACTION ANKARA INFO
ISTANBUL 15 APR.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 076379

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJECT: LIFTING THE TURKISH OPIUM BAN

THE FOLLOWING COLUMN BY JACK ANDERSON APPEARED IN
WASHINGTON POST, APRIL 14, 1974:

BEGIN QUOTE LIFTING THE TURKISH OPIUM BAN. THE STREETS
OF AMERICA HAVE BECOME SAFER SINCE OPIUM GROWING WAS OUT-
LAWED IN THE DISTANT HILLS OF TURKEY. BUT BY EARLY
SUMMER, BARRING A POLITICAL MIRACLE, THE TURKISH GOVERN-
MENT WILL TELL THE IMPOVERISHED OPIUM FARMERS IN THE
REMOTE AFYON REGION THAT THEY CAN ONCE AGAIN PLANT THEIR
TRADITIONAL MONEY CROP: THE OPIUM POPPY WHICH GIVES AFYON
ITS NAME.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 STATE 076379

THIS EXPECTED TURKISH ACTION WOULD HAVE AN INEVITABLE IMPACT ON THE U.S. CRIME RATE. FOR OUT OF THE NEW OPIUM HARVEST WOULD COME AN ILLEGAL FLOOD OF HEROIN INTO THIS COUNTRY. AS MORE HEROIN BECAME AVAILABLE, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WOULD TRY IT AND BECOME ADDICTED. MOST OF THEM WOULD BE FORCED TO TURN TO CRIME TO SUPPORT THEIR HABIT.

THE EFFECT ON U.S. CITIES, NARCOTICS OFFICIALS TELL US, WOULD BE MEASURED IN ROBBERY, VIOLENCE AND DEATH. THEY USE WORDS LIKE "DISASTROUS" AND "CATASTROPHIC" TO DESCRIBE

THE CONSEQUENCES.

YET THE PRESSURE TO LIFT THE OPIUM BAN IS COMING IN PART FROM A FEW U.S. PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS LOOKING FOR CHEAP MORPHINE. THEY ARE IN STRANGE COMPANY, RANGING FROM OPIUM GROWERS AND INTERNATIONAL SMUGGLERS TO MAFIA MOBSTERS AND CORRUPT TURKISH LEGISLATORS--ALL EAGER TO REVIVE THE HEROIN TRAFFIC.

BEFORE 1972, WHEN OPIUM GROWING WAS BANNED IN TURKEY IN EXCHANGE FOR 35.7 MILLION DOLS. COMPENSATION FROM THE AMERICAN TAXPAYERS, HUGE OPIUM SHIPMENTS WERE DIVERTED TO FRANCE FOR REFINING INTO HEROIN AND THEN WERE SMUGGLED INTO THE UNITED STATES.

WE HAVE OBTAINED A SECRET HOUSE REPORT, WHICH ESTIMATES AT ONE POINT "UP TO 80 PER CENT OF HEROIN IN THE UNITED STATES CAME FROM TURKISH OPIUM GUM." THE 1972 BAN DRAMATICALLY REDUCED THE FLOW INTO THIS COUNTRY UNTIL ONLY THE HARD-CORE ADDICTS COULD OBTAIN HEROIN. SUDDENLY, IT BECAME ALMOST UNAVAILABLE TO THE YOUNG DRUG "CHIPPERS," WHO LIKE TO LIVE DANGEROUSLY.

THE HOUSE REPORT, AUTHORED BY NARCOTICS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LESTER WOLFF (D-N.Y.), DESCRIBES WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE TURKISH CONNECTION WAS CUT OFF. "HEROIN ADDICTION," IT STATES, "(WAS) REDUCED FROM BETWEEN 500,000 AND 700,000 TO ABOUT 200,000 ACTIVE ADDICTS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 STATE 076379

"THE PRICE OF ONE MILLIGRAM OF HEROIN IN NEW YORK CITY WAS 44 CENTS IN 1972; BY MID-1973, (IT) HAD RISEN TO 1.52 DOLS. THE STREET LEVEL PURITY OF HEROIN SOLD TO ADDICTS DECREASED...FROM 7.7 PER CENT TO 3.7 PER CENT."

WITH THE DECLINE IN ADDICTION CAME A CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN CRIME AND MISERY. "OVERDOSE DEATHS, DRUG-

RELATED HEPATITIS AND DRUG-RELATED PROPERTY CRIMES,"
DECLARES THE REPORT, "HAVE DECLINED THROUGHOUT MOST AREAS
OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SIX YEARS."

THE END OF OPIUM PLANTING IN TURKEY CAUSED REPERCUSSIONS,
INDEED, THROUGHOUT THE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD OF DRUGS. IN
EUROPE, THE CORSICAN CRIMINALS WHO HAD MADE HUGE PROFITS
FROM HEROIN SMUGGLING WERE COMPELLED TO INVEST THEIR
MONEY IN MORE OR LESS LEGITIMATE BUSINESSES. THE FEDERAL
NARCOTICS INVESTIGATORS WARN, HOWEVER, THAT THE MAFIA IS
KEEPING ITS INVESTMENTS SEMI-LIQUID IN ANTICIPATION OF A
REOPENING OF THE OPIUM TRAFFIC.

IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, OPIUM TRADERS IN THE MOUNTAINOUS
GOLDEN TRIANGLE OF BURMA, THAILAND AND LAOS BEGAN TO
FEEL OUT THE UNITED STATES AN SXCHANNGE DEAL SIMILAR TO
THAT MADE WITH TURKEY. ONE GROUP OFFERED TO SELL 400
TONS OF OPIUM TO THE UNITED STATES TO GET IT OFF THE
MARKET.

IN INDIA, THE SOVIETS BEGAN BUYING UP LEGAL OPIUM FEVER-
ISHLY FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES. SUDDENLY INDIA, WHICH LEADS
THE WORLD IN LEGITIMATE OPIUM SALES, ALSO FOUND ABOUT
25 PER CENT OF ITS CROP BEING DIVERTED TO CRIMINAL
ELEMENTS.

BUT IN TURKEY ITSELF, AN OUTCRY AGAINST THE BAN BEGAN TO
SWELL. THE FARMERS WHO WERE SUPPOSED TO GET THE
AMERICAN AID COMPLAINED IT ARRIVED LATE WHEN IT CAME AT
ALL. THEY SUSPECTED, WITH SOME JUSTICE, THAT THE U.S.
PAYMENTS WERE GOING INTO THE BOTTOMLESS POCKETS OF COR-
RUPT OFFICIALS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 STATE 076379

CHAIRMAN WOLFF, ACCOMPANIED BY REP. CHARLES RANGEL
(D-N.Y.) TRAVELED INTO THE TURKISH HINTERLAND TO GET, AS
THE REPORT PUTS IT, "SOME INSIGHT INTO THE POPPY BAN IN
TURKISH EYES." FEELING AMONG THE OPIUM TRADERS RAN SO
HIGH THAT THE TWO CONGRESSMEN HAD TO BE GUARDED BY ARMED
TURKISH AND AMERICAN SECURITY MEN.

THE CONGRESSMEN MET A 70-YEAR-OLD FARMER WHO "HAD GROWN
POPPIES ON THOSE HILLS EVERY YEAR UNTIL 1972," THEY RE-
LATE. "HE HAD, AT THE GOVERNMENT'S SUGGESTION, GROWN
SUNFLOWERS AS A SUBSTITUTE...BUT HE DID NOT LIKE THE TASTE
OF SUNFLOWER SEED OIL. HE ALSO PLANTED BARLEY NOW ...BUT
IT EARNED LESS MONEY THAN THE POPPY."

WOLFF ASKED HIM WHETHER HE WANTED TO GROW POPPIES AGAIN.

"YES," SAID THE OLD FARMER SIMPLY.

MOST OF THOSE INTERVIEWED ALONG THE ROCKY ROADS OF AFYON FELT THE SAME WAY. SOME SAID GRUDGINGLY THEY WOULD ABIDE BY THE GOVERNMENT DECREE. BUT OTHERS WERE OPENLY REBEL-
LIOUS, ADMITTING THEY HAD ILLEGALLY SOLD OPIUM GUM.

"TWO OPIUM PRESSERS SPOKE WITH INDIGNATION ABOUT HOW THEIR SMALL BUSINESSES DISAPPEARED WITH THE END OF THE POPPY SEED SUPPLY," RECOUNTS THE REPORT. "A LOCAL DOCTOR SAID THAT THE BAN WAS IMPOSED WITH HASTE AND WITHOUT ADEQUATE CONSIDERATION."

BUT PERHAPS WOLFF'S MOST DISTURBING DISCOVERY WAS THE ROLE

OF SOME U.S. PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS IN THE BACKSTAGE CAM-
PAIGN TO LIFT THE OPIUM BAN. HE FOUND THE FIRMS WERE
QUIETLY BUT ACTIVELY LOBBYING WITH THE TURKISH GOVERN-
MENT, GENEVA NARCOTICS CONFERENCE AND EVEN THE U.S. CON-
GRESS. IN SHORT, THESE PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS ARE MORE
INTERESTED IN REDUCING THE PRICE THEY HAVE TO PAY FOR
OPIUM THAN IN PREVENTING DRUG ADDICTION AND STREET CRIME.

THE SECRET REPORT CONCLUDES GLOOMILY: "AN APPARENTLY
INSOLUBLE PROBLEM FACES THE UNITED STATES AND TURKEY CON-
CERNING THE OPIUM BAN. EACH HAS TAKEN A COURSE WHICH,
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 05 STATE 076379

WHEN FULFILLED, WILL PROBABLY RESULT IN A FRONTAL COLLI-
SION WITH THE OTHER."

THE REPORT URGES THAT THE CHANNELS BE KEPT OPEN WITH
TURKEY AND THAT THE CROP DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAM BE
PURSUED. "RAISING THE LE
E E E E E E E

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, OPIUM, NARCOTICS, LAW, JOURNALISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE076379
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SNM:HRWELLMAN:BB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740088-0296
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740439/aaaabjbe.tel
Line Count: 202
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SNM
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 17 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <07-Aug-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LIFTING THE TURKISH OPIUM BAN THE FOLLOWING COLUMN BY JACK ANDERSON APPEARED IN
TAGS: SNAR, TU, US, (ANDERSON, JACK)
To: GENEVA NEW DELHI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005